

¶ Foure Sermons

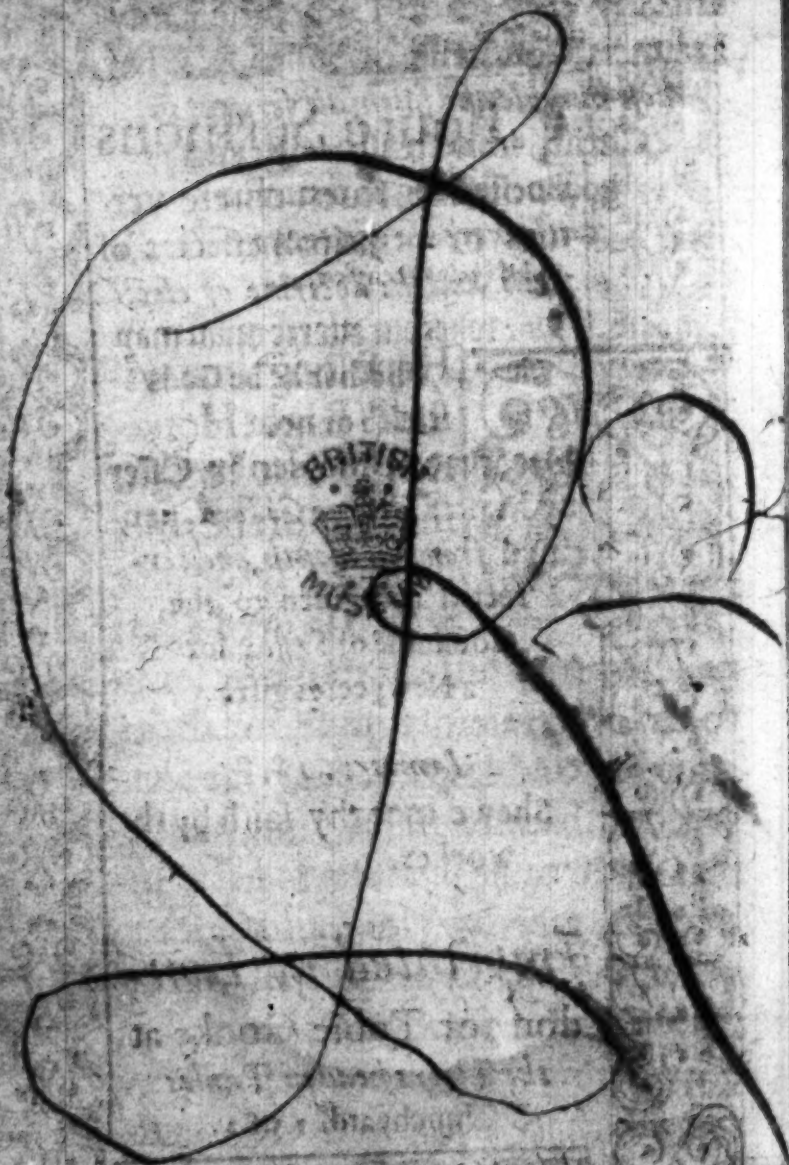
vpvpon the seven chiefe ver-
tues, or principall effectes of
Faith, and the doctrine of electi-
on: wherein euerie man may
learne, whether he be Gods
childe or no.

Preached at Malden in Essex
by Master George Gifford, pen-
ned from his mouth, and cor-
rected and giuen to the
Commune of Sussex, for
a Newycceres gift.

Iamas. 2. 18.

Shewe meethy faith by thy
workes.

Imprinted at Lon-
don for Tobie Cooke at
the Tigers head in Paules
Churchyard. 1582.



¶ *To the right honorable*
and my very good Lady, the Lady
Frauncis, Countesse of Suffex, R. I. her
most humble and faithfull servant in
Christ, wisheth all health and
godlinesse, long to continue
with increase of vertue
and zeale in religion.



Haue long time wi-
shed (Right Hono-
rable) that I might
in some sort be able,
if not to recōpence
which in deed I shal
neuer, yet at the least to shewe some
token of a grateful minde, for all the
ancient kindnes, & louing fauour,
which I haue found at your hands:
this hath caused mee to foreslip no
occasiō, wherby I might haue som-
what to present you withall, which
might tend to your soules health: for
concerning the thinges which per-
taine to the body, as honours, digni-

Ca

ties

The Epistle

ties and riches, the high Lorde of
Lords hath giuen you so much, that
though I would neuer so faine, yet
I cannot benefite you in them: ha-
uing therefore of late a kinsman at
home with me, who being, some-
what of a readie hande, hath taken
from the mouth of our Preacher,
certaine of the Sermons which hee
hath preached, whiche beeing
again e ouerseene and corrected, I
thought it my dutie, to offer them
vnto your honor, as a taste of those
fruites wherewith the Lorde doth
feede vs in the Countrie. Beeing a
great deale the more bold to doe it,
because I know they bee such as ye
haue long time shewed a loue to
taste of: & I trust these shal also come
vnto you as ripe and timely fruites
of pleasant and delightfome taste, al-
though they be set before you in no
golden or siluer plate, but as it were

Dedicatorie.

In a wooden platter: for the holie
Apostle Saint Paule saith, that this
treasure is brought in earthen ves-
sels. I beseech your honour there-
fore to accept of my poore good
will, and to take this my small gifte
in good part: which nothing doub-
ting of, I pray God to multiplie his
blessings and graces vpon you, to his
glorie, and your euerlasting com-
fort, Amen.

Your honours in Christ,

Richard Iosua Senior.



To the godly Reader.



Considering that for a Christian, being sicke in soule, and desiring to bee made sounde, sorrowfull in spirit, & craving comfort, vnquiet in minde, and seeking to be at rest, wounded in conscience, and woulde bee in safetie, tormented in thought, and longeth for releife, hauing offended God, and therefore is punished, visited with affliction, and faine would be deliuered, there is no other salue but the worde of God: And knowing also, that it is the dutie of euery good christian in his calling to seeke, and thirst after the aduancement, and increase of the kingdome of Christ, & the ouerthrowe & utter confusion of blindnesse, error, popery, superstition, and to bee short, of all the power of Antichrist: I haue thought it my dutie the rather (Gentle Reader) to request here vnto, by sundrie godly men my friends, the Preacher hereof to publish this booke containing sundrie points of doctrine tending to the comfort of the godly, & the assurance
of

To the Reader.

of their saluation: as also diuers confutations of sects and heresies, which to him that readeth it with a well disposed minde, shall be no lesse profitable, then it is brieife. Marue! not at the shortnesse of it: the cause thereof is this, that the repetition in the beginning of eu-ry sermon, to auoid tediousnesse, is omitted. Looke not for (I pray thee) finesse of speeche, or eloquence in the reading hereof: but way the matter deeply, and applie it to thy selfe effectually, that thou mayest reape profite hereout, to thy soules health, and comfort, the which God graunt thee, for his Sonne Iesus Christ his sake. Amen.

*Thine in Christ, Ri-
chard Iosua Iunior.*

The first Sermon.

BEfore we begin to handle or intreate
of the wordes of this text, it shall not
be amiss to note to whom & when this
Epistle was written. Concerning the first
of these, it appeareth by the third chap.
and 1. ver. that it was written vnto the
same that the former Epistle was. For
thus he speaketh. This second Epistle I
write vnto you, beloued, in which I stirre
vp your sincere minde, by putting you
in remembrance. now these were the
Iewes which were scattered abroad in
the dispersiō through diuers countries,
as it is expressed in the first chap. of the
former Epistle: for the Iewes were spe-
cially his charge, as the care of the Gen-
tiles was committed vnto Paul. Gala-
thians the 2. chapter, 7. and 8. verses. The
wordes are these: when they sawe that
the Gospell of the vncircumcision was
committed to mee, as the Gospell ouer
the circumcision was vnto Peter: for he
was mightie by Peter in the Apostlship,
ouer the circumcision, was also mightie
by me towards the Gentiles. For the 2.
this Epistle was written by Peter in his
extreme age, when he had euen finished
his

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his course, and was readie to lay downe
his tabernacle, as he speaketh here in the
14. vers. As for the occasions which mo-
ued him to write, they shall appeare in
the particular handling of the matters.

1. Now let vs come to the wordes of
the text, the 1. verse hath two members;
In the former he setteth foorth his own
dignitie, that he is not only a seruant of
God, but a principall seruant, and one
which commeth vnto them as the Am-
bassadour of god, to the end they might
knowe that they had to doe with God,
and not with men, and so submit them-
selves to the doctrine & message which
he brought: for whatsoever God spake
by the Apostles, he so guided their tong
& pen by his spirit, that nothing which
they spake or wrote, was their own, but
altogether his. In the second member,
he setteth forth the dignity which those
to whom he writ had with himselfe: in
these wordes, *To those which haue obte-
ned the like precious faith with vs:* as if he
should say, although I be aboue you in
the Apostolike dignitie and function, yet
you are equal with me & with the rest of

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the Apostles in the chiefe and principall dignitie, & in that wherein all happines doth consist, euē our precious faith. Here it may bee demaunded, howe Saint Peter can ascribe vnto them a faith equall or like precious with his owne, seeing he did so farre excell them in giftes and graces, as in knowledge, & strength of faith. The answer is easie inough, namely, that this comparisō is not made in the measure & quācity of faith, for therein some haue excelled others farre, because God doth not giue his gifts to all alike: but in the effect, which is the apprehending of Christ with al his merits, which the weak faith doth as wel as the strong, and therefore in this respect is equally precious. This I speake, not to make any slauthfull, when as the Scriptures do prick vs forward so much to seek increase of faith, but for the comfort and hartning of the weake, which feeling their infirmitie and weaknes of faith, if it were not for this which the Apostle speaketh, might doubt whether they were pattakers of the same happinesse with them: now hearing this they
may

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may be wel assured, although their faith should be but as a grain of mustardseed, yet if it bee true faith, it coupleth them to Christe, and maketh them partakers of redemption, to haue their sinnes washed away in his blood of righteousness, to be couered with his obediēce of life, to be heires of the kingdome of glorie, as wel as the faith of Peter, or any other. Vnto this is also ioyned that wherein the stablenes of this their faith doth stande, as vpon a sure foundation, euē the righteousness of God and of our Sauour Iesus Christe. And indeede the building of faith is so waightie, and the frame so heauie, that it can stande vpon no other foundation but this, that is to say, the righteousness, faithfulness, or truth of God which cannot lie. For if we would perswade a man to beleue by this reason, that the thing which wee speake, is that which hath been taught by diuers men of great learning & singular godlines: yet because we know that al men are lyers, except wee bee sure that the things which they speake, be those which God hath spoken, wee shall still wauer,

A 3

and

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and our faith shalbe no faith, which alone can rest in the authoritie of God, and not of men.

2 The seconde verse conteineth his salutation, even that which is common to him with Paul & the other Apostles; wishing grace and peace, to those vnto whom they write. And this they do, because it is the chiefe scope and principal ende of their ministerie, to bring men againe into Gods fauour, & to be reconciled vnto him. Of this thing speaketh S. Paul, 2. Cor. 5. chap. ver. 18. saying. All things are of God which hath recôciled vs to himself by Iesus Christ. And hath giuen vnto vs the ministerie of reconciliation, for God was in Christe and reconciled the worlde to himselfe, not imputing their sinnes vnto them; and hath committed to vs the word of reconciliation. Now the are we Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseeche you through vs, wee pray you in Christe his steede, that you bee reconciled to God. This beeing the chiefe end of their trauell, causeth them so earnestly to wish it for the people; and to bee so serious,

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not only in teaching them this generally,
ly, but also pointing out as it were with
the finger, the way to the same; and that
not onely in their doctrine but also in
their liues. Whosoever digresseth or
casteth his eyes aside from this marke &
ende of his ministerie, ceaseth to bee the
Minister of Christe. As for example, if
hee preach the Gospell to purchase re-
nowme, estimation, wealth of ease, to
himselfe, and not to seeke this reconcili-
ation betweene God and men; and to
haue grace and peace multiplied vpon
them, he may wel sometimes preach the
truth, but not truely.

In likewise, those parentes whiche set
foorth their children to learning, with
this minde: My sonne shall liue an easie
and merie life, hee shall get some liuinge,
promotions, & dignities in the Church:
do lay a corrupt and rotten foundation,
& haue not learned this doctrine of the
Apostle, and therefore the building fol-
lowes agreably: for the most, whē they
come to haue learning, not forgetting
this lesson which they learned of their
fathers, doe become greedie catchers of

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benefices and promotions, rather than
carefull feeders of the flocke of Christ.
But here it may be objected, how the A-
postle can wish, that grace which is the
free fauour of God, should be multipli-
ed vpon them, seeing that Gods loue &
fauor doth not increase nor diminish,
but hee loueth and fauoureth alwayes
alike, being subiect to no alteration or
change. This may wel be answered, that
Sainte Peter doeth not speake here of
grace, as it is in it selfe in God towards
me; but of their feeling the same, which
groweth by degrees from lesse to grea-
ter, and because it is a thing so precious,
the Apostle wisheth that it may be mul-
tiplied vpon them. Hee expresseth the
meane to be the knowledge & acknow-
ledging of God, and of Iesus Christ our
Lord.

*3. According as his diuine power hath
giuen vnto vs all things that pertaine vnto
life & godlines, through the acknowledging
of him that hath called vs vnto glory and
blessednes.*

This is fitly ioyned to the former
verse,

verse, to shew that the abundance of grace and peace is not without cause required at our handes, as if the Apostle shoulde say, You are not to content nor to satisfie your selues with a scant measure of Gods giftes and graces, seeing that there is offered vnto you, & set forth in Christ, vnto whom you may resort as to a storehouse fully furnished with all treasures, all things which pertain to life and godlinesse.

Secondly, we haue to obserue in this verse, when hee saith that all things are giuen vnto vs by his diuine power, that here is nothing left in the worke of our saluation vnto our selues, so that it must needs follow, that these which defend free will, doe not speake with the same spirite which the Apostle doth here. For setting forth a contrary doctrine to this it must needs proceed from a contrary spirite. The Apostle doth not say heere, that all those things which wee want, through the weakenesse of our nature, shalbe supplied, but to shew that there is nothing in vs at all, but that wee are quite stript of all things which pertaine

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to life and godlinesse, Hee speaketh not of repairing or helping in some parte, but of a whole and free gifte in euerie part: when he saith whithout exception that all thinges are giuen vnto vs by the diuine power, which pertaine vnto life, and godlines: and so this doctrine doth challenge all the praise and glory of our saluation to God alone.

Thirdly, it may be demanded why the Apostle shoulde say that all thinges are giuen vnto vs by the diuine power or Godhead of our Saniour Christe, when it is manifest that wee ferche all thinges from his manhood: and therefore hee saith in the 6. chap. of S. Iohn, verse 46. I am the bread of life: and againe in the 54. verse of that same chapter, Hee that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood I will raise him vp in the last day: For my fleshe is meate indeede, and my blood is drink indeed: by this it is manifest, that life is giuen vnto the worlde, by the manhood of Christe. The answer is easie, that Christe in his manhoode is a creature, and therefore hath nothing of his owne, but whatsoe-

uer

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ueris in him, as to bee the life of the worlde, and the light of men, and to haue in him al the treasures of wisdom: This commeth from the diuine nature, which dwelleth in him bodily, as Saint Paule speaketh. Nowe the cause why all these are put into the manhoode of Christe, is that from thence wee maye bee partakers of them: for so long as they haue residence onely in God, wee are so farre remoued from him that by no meanes wee can approche or come neere vnto him to drawe out of him any drop of the same. Therefore though all things bee giuen vs by this meanes, that GOD hath put them into the fleshe of Christ, and so is come downe neere vnto vs, that wee may lay fast hold of him: yet neuerthelesse because the proprietie of them remaineth still in the diuine nature, the gifte of them is heere ascribed vnto the power thereof.

Fourthly, we are to note in this verse, that the Apostle doeth briefly set downe the ende and summe of religion, and of all these giftes, when he saith

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saith, which pertaine to life and godli-
nesse: for in these two wordes, vnto
which the other two do answere, which
are set downe in the latter end of the
verse, glorie and vertue, all those giftes
are contained. For that which hee
expressed first by life, heere by glorie,
that which before he called godlinesse,
here he calleth vertue: they are as much
as to say, eternall felicitie, and life with
glorie, and the way which we must passe
through to the same, which is godlines
and vertue. Here we are to take great
heede, that wee doe not seuer or sunder
those thinges which the Lorde himselte
hath so neerely coupled and linked to-
gether. And this admonition is so much
the more necessarie, because there are
very many carnall professors and beastly
abusers of christianity, which doe seeme
very willingly and gladly to imbrace the
promises of the Gospell, concerning
redemption and eternall life purchased
in Christe Iesus: and they make great
boast that they looke for their parte in
the same as well as any other, & yet they
looke nothing at al to this godlines and
vertue,

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vertue, through which we most passe vn
to it, for God hath not called vs, but as
hee saith heere, to glorie and vertue, so
that whomsoever the Lorde hath called
to know him aright, and so to be made
heires of eternall glorie, he hath also gar
nished them with vertues and graces of
the spirite of sanctification. Vntill such
time therefore, as there shall rise vp a
new Peter, which with contrary pen shall
write a newe and contrary gospell, these
men shall neuer assure them selues, nor
yet perswade others that they shall euer
come to the kingdome of God, seeing
they goe a quite contrarie way.

*4. Whereby most great and precious
promises are given vnto vs, &c.* Now hee
sheweth by what meanes or by what in
struments the diuine power doeth be
flow those giftes vpon vs, and the same
are as hee calleth them, most great and
precious promises which are giue vnto
vs, whereby we are called to glorie and
vertue, as hee speaketh in the former
verse: these are called most great & pre
cious, because the things which are of
fered vnto vs in the gospell of Christ for
greatnes

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greatnes & dignity are incōpatable. For what cā we seeke out to match with this that here is offered vnto vs: namely the remission of our sins in the blood of his sonne, deliuerance & freedom from the thraldom of Satan & power of darknes, that of damned creatures & children of his wrath, he hath giue vs this high dignity to be his sonnes & daughters: & as S. Iohn saith, Reue. 1. Christ hath washed vs in his blood, and made vs kings and priests to god his father: what a change is this, from the lowest misery, eue in the gulf of hel, to be lifted vp, to the highest dignitie, to be glorified with God in the kingdō of heauen? Because therefore these things are the greatest & most honorable, S. Peter calleth the promises of the gospel, most great & precious. But wherefore doeth the apostle ascribe all to the doctrine of the gospel? for when he saith, that by these we are made partakers of the diuine nature, hee includeth all, because it is by the gospel that we are called home to the Lord: for although hee utter his will vnto vs in his law, yet therein hee sheweth himselfe none other wise
vnto

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into vs, but as a severe iudge, we can see nothing there, but the dreadful curse, & vengeance of eternall fire: his brightnes appeareth therein, but we be not able to beholde the same, but are daseled with the sight therof, amazed & confounded so that we cannot but runne from him, bicause there is nothing but that which is terrible. Cōtrariwise, in the Gospel, he hath reuealed himselfe in the face of his sonne, where hee sheweth an exceeding glory, but with such fatherly loue, & pitie, such abundance of mercie, and sweete allurements, by which he calleth vs and draweth vs to himself: that here wee are able to looke vpon him with open face, and heere his countenance is so cheereful, that the soule which hath once, with the eye of faith seene but a glimpse thereof, is so inflamed and raiued with desire of a neerer and fuller sight, that it can neuer bee satisfied. For this cause Saint Paule making comparison betweene the ministerie of the Lawe and the ministerie of the Gospell. 2. Corinthians, 3. Termeth that the ministratiō of death, and the letter which

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which killeth: and this the ministration
of the spirit which giveth life, Which by
the way also is to be observed, because
there be among vs at this day many fra-
nke braines, namely those of the Family
of loue, which call the true & sound in-
terpreting of the word, the literal sense,
or the letter which killeth, & their owne
grosse and foolish allegories the spirit; not
knowing that S. Peter speaketh of
the difference betweene the Lawe, and
the Gospel. Here also appeareth of what
prize and dignitie the gospel is: for who
can set forth the worthinesse of this,
who he saith, that by these promises we
are made partakers of the diuine nature
we were indeed at the first created after
the Image of God, and so partakers of
his nature: but we lost all this with our
first parents, & in steede thereof we were
made partakers of the diuinish nature,
bearing his Image and fulfilling his
lustes. Nowe by faith in the Gospel,
this Image is restored and built vp in vs
again, whilst we receive the spirit of
sanctification ioyned with the same. If
men did know this first, that all happi-
nesse

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pellorid men is to be made partakers of
the nature of God, & to communicate
with him and that that this is wrought
only by the Gospel: men would not so
loathsomely despise it, and preferre every
light commoditie, and trifling pleasure
before it: men would not seek to dis-
grace & slander it, men would not be so
soone wearie in hearing of it, nor thinke
every hour a ten while they bee at it. Fi-
nally, men, unless they were mad men,
would not as they doe now almost every
where, thinke them selves best at ease
when it is furthest from them: for who
would willingly throw himselfe head-
long to destruction? who would so play
the mad beastes, as to thrust God from
them? or refuse to bee made partakers of
his heavenly nature? which al they doe,
that haue as yet felt no sweetness in the
Gospel, or at least haue so little tasted it
that it can scarce obtaine colde Ioue at
their hands. But there needeth some what
to be said vpon the phrase of speech which
S. Peter useth, for it is some what hard to
somet, & as it was in old time fouly abu-
sed by heretikes, so is it wickedly at this
day

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day persecuted by the lovely Familie;
which holding this doctrine that men
are deified, and God is hominified, as
their language is, meaning that the very
essence and substance of God, is transfu-
sed into men, and his substance & theirs
mingled together, take great holde of
this, that the Apostle saith, wee are made
partakers of the diuine nature, But you
shal see that every simple man may easily
confute the: if we aske what the nature
of an horse is, wil a man answer that he
is made of the earth: then a horse and a
man are both of one nature, for man is
also made of the earth: it is manifest the,
that none is so foolish but hee will con-
fesse, that when we speake of the nature
of any thing, we meane not the substance,
but the qualities & properties: even so
in this place we must needs graunt, that
by the diuine nature in this place is no-
thing els ment, but that there should be
such a nature and such qualities in men,
as may carrye a resemblance of the di-
uine nature: as for example, god is holy,
wee must bee holy, he is pure, good, iust,
gracious, bountifull, louing, & mercifull,
all

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all these and such like must be also in vs: we shal also come to be partakers of life, of glory, of ioye, of happinesse, and eternitie, and so in a neerer sorte to be partakers of the diuine nature. What are all those now the better, which haue so receiued the precious promises, that their qualities are euen as agreeable to the nature of GOD, as light is with darkenesse, or Heauen with Hell, or Christe with Beliall. Sith so manie shamefull and beastly finnes, flowe and raigne in them, which are so many partakinges of the Diuelishe nature, let them for shame denye that they haue ought wherein they communicate with GOD, in anye thing sauing a bare profession. Then what is it which maketh a good man? The promises of the Gospel. What is it which bringeth life and saluation? The Gospel. Who are they which haue embraced the promises, & haue the true and liuely faith? The holy. Who are they whom God hath called to life eternall, to bee those whome hee loueth as children, bearing his Image? The pure and vndefiled.

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in the last clause of this verse he sheweth
his meaning very plainly, In that, saith
hee yee shie the corruptions which are in
the world through lust, this is the way to
bee made partakers of the diuine na-
ture, for as corruptions and filthie defi-
linges the more they cleaue vnto vs, the
more they separate vs from the Lord, so
contrariwise the more a man doeth shie
and eschewe them, so much the nearer
hee doeth approch vnto God who is
the fountaine of all puritie. We are here
to note that S. Peter maketh al corrupti-
on and naughtinesse in the worlde to
spring out of concupiscence, or as it is
visually translated, lust, where wee must
hearde first, what this concupiscence or
lust is, which is heere saide to bee as it
were the seate of sinne, and indeede it is
the roote and fountaine, out of which
groweth & floweth al euill that is com-
mitted in the world, either in thought,
worde, or dedde: to be short, this is that
which is forbidde in the tenth comāde-
ment, whē he saith, Thou shalt not couet:
at least so much of it is forbidden there,
as pertaineth to the second table, that is
the

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the roote & fountaine of all euil againſt
men, for there is nothing recited in the
ſame laſt commandement, but towarde
men: & when our Sauſour Chriſt ſetteth
foorth the ſumme of the firſt table, hee
ſaith: it is to loue the Lorde with all the
heart, with al the ſoule, &c. Now where
the whole hart is required, there concu-
piſcence muſt needs be forbidde: but ye
will ſay, what is it? wherein doth it conſiſt?
It is not in deeds, words, nor thoughts,
but a more cloſe & inward ſickneſs, bred
as they ſay, in the bones, the natural blot
& ſpot of originall ſinne, which we haue
by inheritance, from our firſt parents, &
bring with vs out of our mothers wombe,
out of which al euil thoughts & deſires
do ariſe in vs. S. Iames in the firſt Chap. of
his Epistle maketh it the wombe & mo-
ther which conceiueth & bringeth forth
ſinne! Let no man (ſaith hee) when he is
tempted, ſay, I am tempted of God, for
God cannot be tempted with euil, nei-
ther tepteth he any man, but euery one is
tempted when he is drawne away by his
own concupiſcence, & is enticed: the luſt
when it hath conceived, bringeth forth

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sinne, & sinne whē it is finished bringeth forth death. The first thing we haue here to note in this doctrine is this : that all corruptiō is of our selues, not comming from any outward cause : it is true that Satan is an instrument, & as it were the bellowes to stirre and kindle in vs the lustes of sinne, and beareth a very great stroke in the matter: but if it were not for this concupiscence that is in vs, hee could not bring his matters to passe, the prouocations and alurementes of wicked men, are so many meanes to driue vs and draw vs into sinne, but yet the cause is in our selues. A chiefe point to bee obserued that wee may learne to condemne our selues when wee haue done amisse, and not after the maner of men, which looke when they haue faulted howe they may disburthen themselves, and be discharged of the blame, and therefore they will either crie out of the Diuell, as though hee, as they say, ought them a shame, or els they will say, woe worth such or suche that euer I knew them, if it had not been for them, I should not haue done thus. The Pro-
phete

phete David when hee had committed
murther and adultery, being reproved
by Nathan, although hee knewe right-
wel that the Diuel was a great furtherer
in the matter: likewise hee might haue
thought vpon the fonde dealing of the
woman, which so indiscretly washed her
selfe in such a place as others might see
her: yet hee letteth these goe, and to the
ende hee may wholly and fully con-
demne himself, he looketh home to the
wellspring of all this foule and beaulty
sinne, and saith, Beholde I was borne
in wickednesse, and in sinne hath my
mother conceived mee: as if he shoulde
say, O Lorde, I can doe seeke any way to
be excused, for all this rebellion against
thee, is conceived and bred in mine
owne corrupt brest, I brought the roote
of it from my mothers wombe. This is a
good lesson for vs to learne, for so long
as wee doe not knowe it, but like partial
and corrupt Iudges go about to excuse
our selues, & to rid our hands of that we
haue committed, we shal neuer come to
any sincere repêtace. Further, we are here
to obserue in this place that al corruptiō

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continuing from this dust, if we will re-
pent in deede, we must begin heere. For
if they bee changed onely in their out-
warde deedes and wordes, and this in-
ward sickness not healed, they have gai-
ned nothing, no more the a man which
would destroy a tree, and doth no more
then loppe & shede of certaine boughes
and twigges, leaving the stumpe and
roote behynde: for so long as this doth
live in them, they may well seeme in the
eyes of men, to bee very great conuerts,
it they bee ignorant idiots, are become
suche as haue gotten some skill and
knowledge from drunkardes, ruffians,
adulterers, and such like, they become
sober and modest, and of good behavi-
our: as this may bee done before men,
and yet the hart nothing altered before
God: for there bee many causes which
may moue men to seeme outwardlye
to bee godly, when the heart within
is fraught with longsome lustes, and
full of rotten corruptions, whiche make
men still altogether abominable be-
fore God. To bee short therefore a man
shall neuer rightly iudge of him selfe
when

The first Sermon.

whether hee haue repented, yelſſe hee
looke to the bottome of this ſore, that it
may be healed. The greateſt multitude
of men, being as blind as beetles in this
point, imagine that repentance, is a very
light & eaſie thing, which they can haue
when they liſt: when a man of wiſdome
ſaith this, that here lieth ſo deep a mar-
ter, that heere be rootes which are hard
to be pulled vp, hee is moued to bee the
more carefull, leaſt he deceiue himſelfe.
Looke therefore euery man to his
thoughts, for by them is the trial made:
if the thoughts be chāged, & the inward
deſires altered, ſo that of prophane and
worldly, they are become holy and hea-
uently: then hee may boldly ſay, I haue a
newe heart, and there is a right ſpिरितe
renued in mee, I haue repented, I haue
not plaid the hypocrite, I feele an up-
right heart toward God, I feele the cor-
rupt fountaine ſtopped, ſo that the filthy
matter, and ſinking mudde doeth not
boyle forth as it did. It may alſo
bee demanded heere, whether this
luſt be not a ſinne or a corrupti-
on. **By** *ſermon* on
bair.

The first Sermon.

on of it selfe, because S. Peter saith, that corruption resteth in it. The place which I alleadged out of the 51. Psalme, doeth prooue it to bee a sinner: also it may be proued out of the fifth to the Romans, Where Saint Paule proueth that infants haue sinne, because they are subiect to death, which is the reward of sinne, although as hee saith, they sinne not after the similitude of the transgression of Adam. Therefore if wee had none other but this, it were enough to condemne vs, and vtterly to cast vs away. Let vs neuer cease therefore, vntill wee feele a change in our selues, euen in this secrete infection, for otherwise wee shall neuer bee able to flie the corruptions whiche are in the world, or as Saint Iames speaketh in the first Chapter of his Epistle, to keepe our selues vnspotted of the worlde, so long as wee carie the corrupt world in our own brest: neither that our religion be pure, for thus it is saide, if any man among you seemeth religious and refraineth not his tongue, but deceiueth his owne hearte, this mans religion is vaine, Pure religion and vnde-
filed

The first Sermon.

filed before God, even the father is this,
to visite the fatherlesse and widowes
in their distresse, and to keepe
himselfe vnspotted of the
worlde,



*The seconde Sermon vpon
the 5. 6. and 7. verses.*

- 5 Therefore giue euery al diligence ther-
unto, ioine moreover vertue with
your faith: & with vertue know-
ledge:
- 6 And with knowledge, temperaunce:
and with temperaunce, patience:
and with patience, godlines:
- 7 And with godlines, brotherly kinde-
nesse: and with brotherly kindnes,
loue.

ANd hereunto giue al diligence, &c.
He hath declared in the former ver-
ses, among other chief matters: this one
especially, to howe great holinesse and
purenesse through sanctification, we be
called: which was chiefly expressed in
these wordes, that by them yee may bee
made partakers of the diuine nature, in
that yee flie the corruption which is in
the worlde through lust: vnto this now
he ioyneth an exhortation, requiring at
their handes not only to put to their di-
ligence, but also, as hee saith, euery al di-
ligence,

The second Sermon.

ligence. For this is the greatest and chiefest thing which we are to looke after; so there is required at our handes, to give our principal care and studie thereto: this requite must easily be granted, that if we cannot obtaine or get the things of this life, which are small in comparison, while wee put to our diligence, for God will haue it so be so, that then of good right, looke howe much heavenly things exceede in dignitie the earthly, so much must the care and diligence be bestowed vpon them exceed. How far almost are we from this doctrine both in practise and iudgement? For when we see the exceeding paines & paines which they sticke not willingly to bestowe, in getting the beggerly raine of this world, either riches or honours; they will ryde and trauell early and late by night and by day, by sea and by land, winter and sommer, wearing out their bodies, almost pine and sterue themselves with hunger and beating their braines with as great diligence as can be possible: but when it cometh to these things which S. Peter speaketh, as things of no price, they pass
by

The second Sermon.

by them, in such wise, that they are here
even as slothfull and carelesse, as they
are diligent in the other. For iudgement
in this behalfe, if a man talke with these
worldly men, they wil shew their minde
and opinion, aske them why they bee so
careful for these worldly things, their an-
swere is readie, wee shal otherwise come
short of them, and go without them: &
why do ye not seeke as fast for heauenly
things, they be the greatest: they be in
deede the greatest, but we commit that
to God, wee wil not meddle with that.
Thus they shift off the care of godlines,
as though god did not require it at their
hands: neuer hearing of this which S.
Peter requireth: wee must take heede of
this, giuing care to god, who teacheth vs
this lesson by the holy Apostle: for if we
let this passe, we are most miserable: here
also when wee are warned to giue al di-
ligence, appeareth plainly howe harde
a thing it is to flie from corrupt lubes:
for if it were an easie thing to be done
lesse diligence might serue: but sinne
cleaueth neere and sticketh fast in vs, &
is not easily shaken of: it is deeply roo-
ted,

The second Sermon.

ted, so that while we digge very deepe,
we are sure to leaue the rootes stil be-
hinde, which wil growe & spring againe
as fast as before, yea oftentimes seeming
to bee dead, they suddenly reuiue: so that
wee are set a worke while we liue heere
without any intermission, to be still toy-
ling to pul vp these weedes, the ground
is so ranke, that in a very short time it
will bee wholly ouergrowne. Therefore
such as despise the meanes which God
hath appointed, or vse them ouer negli-
gently, must needs haue their heart o-
uergrowne with these stinking weeds of
lust and concupiscence: and so if euer
there be any good seed in them, as good
motions or inclinations to feare God,
they are by and by choked, so that they
can bring forth no fruite, or at least no
ripe and timely fruite.

But heere may be objected, that this
agreeth not with the former saying,
that the diuine power hath giuen vs
all thinges which pertaine to life and
godlinesse, so there hee ascribeth all to
God, and taketh all from vs, heere he
seemeth to giue somewhat vnto our
diligence,

The second Sermon.

diligence, and so to enable freewill in
vs. We must answer here that God wor-
keth in vs, & alone striketh the stroke,
yet he doeth not worke in vs, as the car-
penter or Mason worketh vpon the log
and the stone, which haue no feeling of
that which is done vpon them, and ther-
fore nothing of them is required: but we
haue a will in vs & reason, which of them
selues beeing corrupt, doth nothing but
hinder this worke, vntill soe time as
god hath fashioned them anew; we haue
appetites & affections in vs, but of them
selues were rebels: these he sauereth and
subdueth. So that this worke of God in
vs, is not without a feeling of it; for hee
moueth vs to wil, to desire, to sorrow, to
reioyce, & such like, for that our diligence
is required, because hee waketh in vs
but he doth make them diligent: there
is still that which God doth bestow
vpon vs, and not that which we haue of
ourselues. By this place al those are an-
swered, which doke and defende them-
selues in their naughtinesse and sloth in
the seruice of God, after this manner:
we haue that which God hath giuen vs,
congruū all

The second Sermon.

all men are not alike godlye, euerie man
cannot doe as you doe: when their own
heart and conscience doeth tell euery of
them the contrary, saying, thou art care-
lesse, and negligent, thou hast as much as
thou desirest: for God doth increase all
gifts and graces in those which vse al di-
ligence in seeking after him. Let vs learne
therefore, brethren, to put in practise al
those things which are beere taught, to
giue greater diligence, and so beate our
braine more earnestly about heavenly
things, then about these earthly, to la-
bour & trauell more for godlines, then
for treasures and riches. Which if we do,
we shall feele increase of strength to cast
out corrupt lusts, although not so much
as faine we would, yet God being true
wee shall haue so much that wee cannot
faile nor misse of our desire. It foloweth,
ioyne moreouer vertue with your faith,
&c. Saint Peter knoweth what babes
we be, how vnable to guide our steppes
in the pathes of godlines, and that ma-
keth him not onlie to mooue and per-
suade to godlines, but even as it were
taking vs by the hande, and teaching vs
C howe

The second Sermon.

howe to treade euery steppe, hee rehearseth particularlye the things wherein wee are to trauell, when he saith, Ioyne moreouer with your faith, vertue, with vertue knowledge, with knowledge, temperaunce, with temperaunce, patience, with patience, godlines, and with godlinesse, brotherly kindenesse, and with brotherly kindnesse loue.

Faith heere is set in the first place, vnto which all the other must beeioyned, because without it wee cannot by any meanes please God, it doth iustifie vs before god alone, but yet it doth not go alone, neither is it dead and fruitlesse, for these things do accompany the same. In the next place therefore, he coupleth vnto this, vertue, which is generally put for all the fruites of faith, and all the duties of a godly life. These cannot bee wanting, but by and by it must needs folow, that the faith is a dead faith, not able to iustifie vs before God, nor to giue life: it cannot indeede bee rightly termed any other then a shadowe or dumbe picture of faith, whiche may carie some shewe
and

The second Sermon.

and colour of that which it resembleth. Euen as wee see some painter so skilful, that he can cast such colours in painting fire, that at the first blush it might make a man iudge it to be fire in deede: but if a man holde his hand to it, to feele for some heate, and to make triall by the effectes, a childe will be able to iudge easily, that it is but a dead image, because the effectes are wanting. Euen so there be very many men, as cunning as any painter, to make a shew of faith, through great bragges and vaunts, that God is their God, & that they al put their whole trust in him, that they looke to be saued as well as the best, yea though but a few, yet they hope to bee of the number of those. Let vs looke therefore that we be not deceiued here, let not the outwarde appearaunce beguile vs, but let vs come to the true triall, if there be as much vertue in their life, as there was heate in the foresaide fire, then knowe that it is euen as good a faith, as that is a fire. For yee maye as well separate fire from the heate thereof, as faith from good and

The second Sermon.

godly vertues, which are the fruits thereof- What shal then bee saide of all those from whom do flow so many filthie sins, that scarce at any time doeth appeare in them, so much as a shadowe of vertue? they cannot deceiue any wise man, much lesse shall they bee able to deceiue God, Let euery one therefore take heede that hee deceiue not himselfe, to thinke that he is richly indued with faith, when hee is so poore in vertue, for if the latter abound, wee are sure the former doth also abounde. For wee must trie our faith by our vertues. Next he willeth to ioine knowledge vnto vertue. These three are general, faith, vertue, & knowledge, and are so lincked together, that they cannot be sundered. For faith is not a blind fantasie whiche man doeth imagine of his owne braine, but it is begun in the right knowledge of Gods will, and increaseth and groweth by the same: it is also the rule and square to measure and guide al vertue by: for we must not thinke, that that is good which seemeth so vnto our reason, but that which God in his reueled will hath called good: vnlesse there-
fore

The second Sermon.

fore vertue did growe in vs, wee cannot haue it, before wee become skilfull, and haue learned it out of the woorde of God. For this cause the Apostle mouing these excellent men to increase in godlinesse, sheweth them the way, when hee willeth them to increase in knowledge,

Nowe if wee marke well, what manner of men they were to whome hee wrote, namelye, no babes nor youngelings in the Gospel, for hee saide they had obtained like precious faith with him, and afterwarde in this Chapter hee saith, they did knowe and were stablished in the present truth : wee shall easily perceiue howe this may stop the mouthes of many, which holde blinde errors, First of al of those, which affirme that ignorance is the mother of deuotion, if godlinesse and vertue be the true deuotion, then it must needes folowe, that their doctrine is false and diuelishe, seeing we are charged to ioine vnto our vertue knowledge: it is true if they mean Popishe deuotion, for they could ne-

The second Sermon.

uer haue kept men in awe, to be zealous of their religion, and to seeke for that at the handes of men, which God alone doeth giue, vnlesse they had kept them in blindnesse and ignorance: and therefore they tooke a wise way, to keepe the people from knowing the worde, which so soone as it brake foorth againe, disclosed all their falshood and treacherye, in so muche that neither good nor bad almost, haue any deuotion vnto them. Secondly of those, which although they bee not rancke Papistes, yet haue in them still a smacke and sauour of Popish principles: and therefore like fooles, are also enemies vnto knowledge. For thus they speake, it were no matter if there were lesse preaching, I thinke the people bee the woorse for it, there is knowledge euen enough, what should laye men bee troubled to learne, or to seeke for the knoweledge of the Scriptures let them tende their woorke, and looke to their occupations, and leaue to bee quiet, and to deale honestlye against these poore blinde beastes, (for
I may

The second Sermon.

I may vse no gentle speeche) wee are
to reason out of this place : first that
all men, knowe they neuer so muche,
are heere commaunded to increase in
knowledge, to the ende they may in-
crease in faith and godlinesse. Second-
ly, let them consider to what manner
of menne Saint Peter wrote, namelye,
to poore and riche men, women and
children, to al sortes, and to bee short,
to as manie as woulde haue Faith and
vertue, and so come to life and glo-
rye, and therefore as well the poore
ploughman, as the greate Clarke is
commanded to increase his knowledge
out of Gods booke : Thirdlye, they
muche overshoot them selues, when
they woulde beare them in hande, that
knowledge, whiche is the guider of
vertue, shoulde bee the cause of vice.
Naye, if wee wipe our eyes, and looke
better to the matter, wee shall see,
that there is a floodde of ignorance,
whiche hath almost ouerwhelmed all,
and in many whiche seeme to know ve-
ry muche, if they were founded to the

The second Sermon.

bottomes, there should be found in them grosse ignorance, and palpable darkness: and so in deede the true cause of al foule sinnes, which abound at this day among vs, and flowe even as a swelling Sea, is the want of true knowledge. This ignorance hath taken such roote, that all they which have made prooffe, will confesse with mee, that our time is like the time of the prophete Esaie, 28. who hauing laboured himselfe as it were out of breathe in teaching, and seeing so smal profiting, beeing commaunded of the Lorde stil to go to his businesse, bursteth forth into these speeches: whom shall I teache knowledge? whome shall I make for to vnderstande? them that are wained from the milke, and drawne from the brestes? for precept must bee vpon precept, precept vpon precept, line vnto line, line vnto line, a litle here, and a litle there. And in an other place, hee saith, the worde of the Lorde was like a sealed booke, if hee come to ope, saying, Reade this I pray you, he maketh answere, I cannot reade, to another that can

The second Sermon.

can reade, hee answereth, I cannot, for it is sealed.

Furthermore, let these feely creatures learne of this place to bee ashamed of that, wherein they seeme after a sorte to glorie, when they vse to saye, as they thinke in defence of themselves, wee be without skil, wee haue no knowledge, wee bee poore honest men, wee haue no learning: it is as much as to say, we haue no faith, we haue no vertue, wee haue no godlinesse: for wee bee plainly taught heere that faith, vertue, and knowledge, must increase and growe vpp together. Let vs al print this lesson deeply in our mindes, that it may drive vs to make haste to come out of our ignorance, and to seeke apace after knowledge. Let vs take heede of flattering our selues as some other doe, whiche hauing gotten some skil, or at leaste thinke that they haue sette very light by the publike teaching of the word, they do excuse themselves after this sort, I thanke God, I am not of the ignorant sorte, nor of the meanest iudgement, I know somewhat,

The second Sermon.

let them hunte after preaching that
needes, it is very good for them, as for
mee, I am sufficiently acquainted with
the matter already: this kinde of men
are harde too deale withall, because
they bee wise in their owne conceits,
and not in the Lorde, for if they had
once but euen a litle tasted of true know-
ledge, of the sweetnesse and power ther-
of, they woulde neuer haue enough of
the first sponesful, if they had an healthful
stomacke, they could neuer be brought
so soone to loath, & as it were to vomit
vp againe, so wholesome sustenance.
But let vs learne heere, that when our
knowledge is growne to bee neuer so
great, because we knowe but in part, and
we know nothing as we ought to know,
as Saynte Paule saith, euen then wee are
to giue all diligence, to ioyne to our
vertue, knowledge, vnlesse when wee
haue begunne and proceeded so farre,
wee minde to fal backe againe. This
place doth plainly set forth the woeful
and miserable state of those whiche bee
without teaching, or haue it in so scanty

The second Sermon.

a measure, that they come almost to no vnderstanding : they are meerie and thinke all is wel, and thinke themselves best, when they are least dealt withall, but iudge righteous iudgement, whiche the Lorde by his Apostle teacheth vs to iudge, and wee shall see, that their myrth is nothing els , but a madde laughter, even in the middest of feareful and horrible destruction. Vnto knowledge ioyne temperaunce, &c . Or continence, for so the worde whiche Saint Peter vseth, may be translated. But what doth he meane, hauing bidden vs to ioyne vertue, to faith? Againe as though he had forgotten himself, to expresse certaine seuerall kindes of vertues, which he wil haue vs to ioyne to the former, when as indeed, the worde Vertue containeth them al. We may not thinke but that hee is very wel aduised , and that he knoweth with whom he hath to doe, what babes and children wee are which must not haue meat set before vs in grosse to bee our owne Caruers, but it must bee mynced too our handes, wee

The second Sermon.

wee must also bee fedde as it were by spoonfuls, For this cause he did not content himselfe to exhort in general vnto vertue, but also to name and pointe vs out certaine chiefe branches, which wee must especially labour about, for vnlesse God shoulde deale with vs in this wise, so vaine are wee, that we should wander and roue, as it were in a wide felde, and neuer come nigh the mark or at least in looking after some one vertue or other, forget and let goe, the chiefe and principal. For wee see many that can rowle in their mouth the name of vertue and godlinesse, and nothing almost but vertue, vertue, as though they woulde perswade men, that their garden did growe ful of such hearbes, but when wee come to this particuler examination, to looke for this vertue and that, in steed of these sweete hearbes, wee shall finde nothinge but stinking weedes. Heere is a great parte of our diligence and wisdom, therefore, that when wee studie for vertue and godlinesse, and when we call vpon the Lord for gifts, we search out euery part, and branche, least wee be overseene

The second Sermon.

seene in some special pointe, and leasse while wee seeke to increase one vertue, another decay in vs, for that shal come to passe, if we cast not our eies diligently on euery side, and so oftentimes wee rather loose then gaine, rather go backward then forward. Out of the negligence in this point of doctrine, or for want of knowledge in it, men grow into securitie, & a very litle contenteth them, yea though it be but euen some shew of vertue, and slouthfully they shuffle of the matter: a thing greatly to be taken heed vnto. Because, out of al question, it is that which hath caused diuers forward men, in continuance of time as it were gathering rust, to become slacke: if wee haue desire therefore to continue, let vs learne to put this lesson in practise. But why doth he wil vs to ioyne temperance or continence with knowledge, it should seeme that he had no regarde of anie affinitie in matching these thinges together, for temperance is conuersant about pleasures and delights: Yes verily, wee shal plainly see, that there is great cause for which he ioyneth eue,

The second Sermon.

ry one of these vertues together. And first to beginne with this, ye are to note that cōtinencie is not conuersant alone, about the delights of the bodie, but also of the mind: so that in seeking knowledge, which we must doe very eagerly, we are to take heede of these extreemes which are contrary to a continēt mind, eyther to bee so wauering, that euery puffle do driue vs frō the manifest truth, or els on the other side to be so stiffe, & so wilfully wedded to our owne iudgement, that wee wil stande in defence of that which we haue once liked, and not admit any reason to the contrarie: both these are contrary to a continent mind: and both of them enemies to true knowledge. Therefore we are warned heere in our diligent searche for knowledge, to take heede that when wee haue learned the truth, wee continue stedfast and vnmoueable in it, not to bee tossed to and fro, as some vnstable mindes are, who when they haue bene taught the truthe, the least doubt that is raised against it, causeth them by & by to shake.

and

The second Sermon.

& to feare whether they be in the righte way or no, also wee must take heede of that stiffenesse, which causeth some to speake when it were better for them too heare: & to be heard aloft, when a lower voyce might serue them better: far from the counsell of S. Iames who willeth vs to be swift to heare, and slow to speake. Let vs be sure our knowledge be wel grounded, before we settle our selues to continue in it: least in steede of heaping vp golde, wee fill our chests with nothing but drosse. Also wee must beware, that wee bend our studie for the knowledge of these pointes which serue to increase godlines, and true edifying. For many seeke for knowledge, but their vayne braine, doth carie them to seeke after curious questions, and too let passe those thinges, which shoulde doe them most good: and this is a sore and grievous sicknesse in men, as the questions they commonly moue, doe shewe. Hee addeth, To temperance ioyne patience. This also may seeme to bee somewhat strange, but if wee looke well vnto it, wee

The second Sermon.

we then shal perceiue the meaning more
plainely : patience is not only requisite
in those which haue receiued the profes-
sion of the Gospel, to beare and indure
al persecutions & afflictions, which of-
tentimes are so raging, that (except wee
haue our hartes wel staied, and seasoned
with patience) wee shal be driuen to for-
sake, and to forswere our knoweledge:
but also it is very requisite to be wel ar-
med and fenced with it, when we shal
haue to do with those which are absurd
and grosse, and therefore it is as a dag-
ger to a mans hearte, to heare al their
blockish reasons against the worde, to
see howe senselesse they are, when the
plaine truth is laide before them: Like-
wise their spiteful raylinges, and fleeing
mockes, which they will vse: their bolde
abusing of Gods worde, their arrogant
presumption, which causeth them to
prattle very fast, euen they knowe not
what: or eles wee shal be hurled hither
and thither vpon rockes, and make ship-
wracke of our mildenesse: and so marre
and disgrace the good cause, which wee
haue in hande. For wicked men will
iudge

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indge al to proceed of rancour & anger,
and ascribe all to chollet, and so by this
meanes there is procured some disho-
nor to God: who should greatly be ho-
nored if we could meekely (as the Apo-
stle willeth) instruct those which are con-
trarie minded, prouing if God at any
time wil giue them repentance, to come
out of the snare of the Diuel of whome
they be holden captiue, to do his wil: &
so to stop their mouthes, that they can-
not be able to answere. The want of this
vertue oftentimes bringeth greate in-
conuenience, to the conference of bre-
thren, which should bring together (as it
were into one heape) whatsoeuer euery
one hath gleaned by himself, that so the
one might supply the want of the other;
but the impatience of some is such, that
great inconuenience doth growe there-
by. To conclude this matter, seing trou-
bles are allotted vnto vs, & sufferings for
the truth, & that we are subiect to so ma-
ny reproches, railings, taunts, & mocks;
at the hands of absurd & euil men who
foeuer looketh to walke in the way of
knowledge, he must seeke to possesse his
D soule

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ſoule in patience. It ſolowith, with patience godlines, &c. A man may demand what maner of order is here vſed, in willing vs to ioyne godlines to patience, & then to godlines, brotherly kindneſſe is not godlines the whole or the general, & theſe brāches, are members of it? True it is that this worde is often vſed, generally to comprehend al goodneſſe, but in this place, it comprehendeth but the firſt table of the lawe, wherein wee are willed to bee deuout or zealous: a very neceſſarie caueat to beware that we doe not become ſo patient, that we forget to be zealous in the Lords quarrel: it is as if Saint Peter ſhould haue ſaid: I woulde not haue you ſo meeke, as to beare and put vp al, I woulde haue you withal to bee hotte in Gods quarrell, forget not that. For many vnder a colour of a meeke patience, doe conuer the want of religion, for if God bee diſhonored, his truth defaced, his ſeruants ſlaundered, they can heare and ſee, and yet bee as meeke as a Lambe: but if themſelues bee touched yee ſhal ſee them playe the Lions, and of luke warme to become
fire

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fire hot, this therefore is no patience which wanteth godlinesse. Wee must learne then, both with patience, and meeknes, to deale in the Lords matters, & also with feruent zeale: least in steed of this excellent vertue of patience, which was commended vnto vs, there be nothing but a prophane vngodlines & an irreligious mildnesse, in which at this day moe do offend, then through impatience: for these Athiests haue this as an excuse very readily. Are we not commanded to be gentle and soft? Is it not our duetie to maintaine lone, and charitie with our neighbours? Indeepe they bee great swearers, and sometime they vse to speake against gods worde, if they be awry, I think they shal answere for themselves, if we should gaine say, or seeme to reprove them, they woulde not take it wel, therefore I thinke good not to disquiet them. Heere is nowe wonderfull patience, these are verye godlye and charitable persons, yea euen a treacherie towards GOD and men. For is there any of them, which being slandered with some foule crime, whereby

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they should receiue great iniurie; or bee spitefully rayled vppon, if some of their neere friendes sitte by and holde their tongues, when they know they be iniured, that cannot by and by feele & say, this was cold friendship, that they could not haue dealt so vnlovingly towards their friendes, by whome soeuer they should haue heard them so abused, they could not haue held their tongues? The belike God nor his truth are none of their deare friends, that they can put vp such iniurie done towards him. There is plentie of this patience in all places, but godlinesse cannot bee suffered to come neere, for he is a breake peace and a very vnpleasent fellow, hee is ouer rough and precise, and ouer captious, there was good neighbourhood and friendshippe before he came, they could be merie together, and bee in vnitie, without anye iarre: had it not bene better to vse gentlenesse and patience, then to haue this broyle? for there is nothing better then lone, and where that is not, there is nothing good. O miserable daies: this is the good lone now amog me, that they

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cannot loue one another, but they must hate God, to haue peace and concorde with men to bee at odds with God, for mens sake, to put vp the dishonoring of his name, not to continue in patience, vnlesse godlinesse bee wanting. The vngodly world, and lowde nature that is in men, taketh occasion to accuse godly zeale, vnder this pretence: and to finde fault with the preaching of the word, because, say they, it setteth men at strife. But we must learne in this place to ioine godlinesse with our patience, for otherwise we shalbe found to be nothing els but irreligious and prophane dogges: although wee pretende loue neuer so much. The time wil not suffer to handle the rest, which remaineth in this text. Let vs remember that which hath beene said, & giue all diligence to pursue these excellent vertues, that so wee may approve our selues to be right Christians, and looke for the blessed hope promised in Iesu Christ.

D.

The

The third Sermon.

- 7 And with godlines, brotherly kindnes,
and with brotherly kindnes, loue.
- 8 For if these things be with you and as
bound, they will make you that ye
shal not be idle, nor vnfruitful, in
the knowledge of our Lorde Iesus
Christ.
- 9 For he that hath not these thinges is
blind and seeth not a farre of, and
hath forgottē that he was purged
from his olde sinnes.

ANd with godlinesse, brotherly kindnes,
etc. Wee haue heard already, that
with our faith must be ioyned vertue or
godly deedes, which it cannot be with-
out, if it be a true faith: with vertue wee
are commaunded to ioyne knowledge,
which may bee a guide thereunto, our
knowledge must goe with temperance,
with this must come patience, & there-
vnto must be ioined godlines. There re-
maine yet two branches of these special
vertues, about which wee are to travell;
the first of these is brotherly loue or
kind-

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kindenesse, which must be yoked with
godlines : as I said, that this godlines he
speaketh of, is referred to the first table
of the law, respecting God and his reli-
gion, that wee bee sound and zelous in
the same, and not as those which are for
al times, and al religions, and therefore
care not what bee saide against religion,
beeing very belliegods and Atheists : so
this is referred to the seconde table, shew-
ing what wee owe vnto men. This is
very fitly, and necessarily added, for as
there bee many, which regarding men
onely, howe to please, and not to griene
or offende them, altogether forgetting
their dutie towards the Lord God, and
wholy shutting him out, as thogh their
chief care should be of men, let pas god-
lines : so there bee some that offend on
the other side, which looking alwaies so
high, as to haue respect to the Lord, and
his trueth, to bee earnest and firie in
that, ouerlooke men, forgetting the
dueties which they owe vnto them : the
holye Apostle meeteth with this mis-
chief, and telleth vs that we must so loue
God, that we also loue men ioyne, faith

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hee, to your godlinesse, brotherly kindness: for vnlesse this be ioyned, and goe with our zeale of Gods worde, it is no true godlinesse, although wee bee neuer so sounge in iudgement and seeme to be as hotte as Moyse or Elias, yea euen to be swallowed vp with burning zeale: for it doeth not proceede from Gods spirite, who doeth also worke the loue towards men wheresoeuer hee goeth: but it doeth proceede of some corrupt cause, as of vaine glorie, or selfe loue, and such like, and deserueth not indeede to bee called godly deuotion, no more then the true faith can be without vertue, or deserueth to be called ought, saue a shadowe, or Image of faith, if it bee without good workes: but it is a bitterness, which resembleth the true zeale, which doth euermore carrie with it, a loue, and care towards men. True it is that to be zealous in spirite, is a singular and speciall gift of God, and they which be without it are but brutish, & senselesse creatures, not knowing God, nor howe precious his glory is: yet this must be looked vnto in euery one of vs, whether we
beare

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heare a louing affection toward our brethren or not: for if we loue God, we must needs loue men, which beare his Image. If we delight in the worde of God, this is one chiefe point of doctrine which is taught in it, that we be louing and kind vnto men. Therefore as Saint Paule 1. Cor. 13. sheweth, that very excellent giftes doe not profite without loue, so likewise in this place wee be taught, that if wee woulde seeme to bee godly, and haue not loue, it is nothing worth. Let euery man therefore lay this doctrine to his heart: that hee must be earnest in the causes of the Lorde, zealous in religion, preferring God and his truth, before all men, whosoeuer, and whatsoever they be: but yet withal that he must looke downe vnto men, rendering vnto them their due also, this doing hee may beholde hee is in the right way. Vnto this brotherly loue wee bee charged to ioyneloue. It may bee heere demanded againe, what manner of speeche this is, which the Apostle doeth vse, for is not brotherly kindnesse or brotherly

loue,

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loue, as the word doth signifie, and loue
al oner. We must bee farre from thin-
king Saint Peter to deale with so little
heerde, as to wil vs to ioyne the very same
thing to the same : wee must therefore
seeke a difference betweene these two.
We may take this difference, either that
the first of these doth expresse what wee
owe towards the Godly, who be chiefly
called the brethren, and the latter what
we owe vnto all, both good and bad ; or
els the former, doth signifie the inwarde
affection of loue, and the latter, the out-
ward practise of the same : for the doc-
trine in both these, is needful to be ope-
ned. If we take then the former sense, we
be willed to ioyne with our loue towards
the godly and faithful brethren (whom
we ought chiefly, and more dearely to
fauour,) a loue also which may reache
euen ouer al, good and bad, friend and
foe, This Saint Paule teacheth when he
willeth vs to do good to all men, but e-
specially to thē which are of the house-
holde of faith. So that we must acknow-
ledge our selues bounden in some sort,
euen to the wicked : according as our
Sauie

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Sanctour doth teach, Math. 5. Bless them
which curse you, pray for them whiche
hate and persecute you: and Saint Paul
saith, Rom. 12. If thine enemy hunger,
feede him: if he thirst, giue him drinke.
Well then, although this bee very harde
to mans nature, yet the Lorde doeth
straightly require it at our hands: and so
that if this bee wanting, wee doe but
deceiue our selues. If we take it in the
latter sense, the first worde to signifie the
inward affection of loue, the other, the
outward practise: then we haue heere a
notable point to be obserued, not to ou-
uershoote our selues in our loue, in iud-
ging it to be right, & sincere, when it is
halting, and lame: for many when they
heare, that we are so straightly charged,
for to loue our neighbours, & that with-
out the same, there is nothing good in
vs, or which God accepteth: looke no
further but thus, whether they bear any
grudge or euil wil in their mindes, & if
they can say I hurt no mā, nor I meane no
hurt to any, they perswade theselues that
this is an excellent loue. And so a stone
meaning

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meaning no hurt may bee saide to loue:
other somewhat wiser, do not only looke
to that one thing, whether they beare
euil will, but also whether they haue any
kind of affection in them, and here they
stay, when they shoulde goe yet this step
further, to see that this kindnes in them,
breaketh foorth into good and charita-
ble deeds: for there may be some louing
affection in a man, and yet bring foorth
but slender fruits, bicause there is a great
slouth in nature, which hindreth men
from putting their loue in vre, for loue is
laboursome and painefull as Saint Paule
setteth it forth 1. Thel, 1. when he saith,
Your laboring loue. If then we wil loue
the brethren, heere is the touchstone, by
which we may proue our loue, that wee
spare not for any labour or cost, nor yet
waxe weery: because loue is not like one
that is lazic & luskish, loyrring at home
within a mans brest, but steppeth abroad
and is verie diligent: neither doeth it
preferre euery light commodity & vaine
pleasure, before the benefite of the bre-
thren. Then by this it is manifest, how
that

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that al those which would seeme to bee
godly, and yet haue cast away the care o-
uer their brethren, at the least thus farre,
that they wil neither trauel, nor be at a-
ny charge, for other mens sake: whose
wealth they shold procure, especially of
the soule, for therein lieth the chiefe tri-
al of loue: because it is a preposterous
thing, to be very tender ouer the bodie,
a rotten carkasse, and to pitie the miserie
thereof so much, & in the meane while,
not to care for that, that is more preci-
ous, namely the soule, the relieuing and
healing of which, shal be the happinesse
of the whole man for euer. This I speake
because wee see many, that wil bestowe
somewhat vpon the reliefe of the bodi-
ly miserie, which haue no pitie vpon me,
which wander in blindness & ignorance,
whose soules are famished & pined, for
want of foode, full of deadly woundes
and sores, which are not salued, bounde
in the bands, and chaines of sinne, hol-
den vnder captiuitie by Satan, euen rea-
die to be swallowed vp, of the bottom-
lesse gulfe of hell: the cause in deede is,
that

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that they haue not yet learned to pitie
their owne soules, and therefore cannot
pitie the soules of their brethren: for if
they did know the spiritual miserie, they
woulde neither spare night nor day in
trauelling to haue it eased: wheras now
contrariwise they can pull backe men,
from godlinesse, and discourage them
from seeking after saluation: they can
laugh & sport themselves in their owne
sinnes, and in the sinnes of their neigh-
bours, as though there were no miserie
therein, finally, being cruel murderers
of soules, would neuertheles, gladly be
deemed charitable: But their bountifull
almes, doth want seasoning. Let vs learn
therefore to pitie, & to shew kindnes to
the bodily necessitie of men, and not to
forget especially, & aboue al, to procure
with al diligence, as much as lyeth in vs,
the saluation of their soules: otherwise
we can neuer be saide to ioyne loue, and
godlinesse together.

In that which followeth in the foure
next verses, there is shewed partly the
great and singuler commodities, which

wce

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wee shall reape, if wee bee garnished with these foresaide vertues : and partly the discommodities, which we shall finde, in the want of the same. And this S. Peter setteth forth, not staying in the bare declaration of the vertues, which indeed of themselves, being so precious & excellent should moue vs, but dealeth with vs, as with those which are lumpish, and dull, needing many spurres, to bee pricked forward withall, and all little enough : let vs bee careful therefore to take heede to that hee saith. If these things be with you, & abound, they will make, &c. In this 8. verse, hee beginneth to shew the commodities which shall redounde vnto vs, if wee so giue our diligence, that wee may bee richly decked with these graces : they wil make you, saith the Apostle, that yee shall not bee idle, nor vnfruitful, in the acknowledging of our Lorde Iesus Christe. It is a shameful thing, when GOD hath shewed himselfe vnto vs in his Sonne, hath called vs into his seruice, out of miserable bondage, for vs to bee ydle, and vnfruitful : If the Lorde haue
planted

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planted vs, if he haue dressed vs, then, as
it is also said by our sauour Christ, Iohn
15. Herein is my father glorified, that ye
goe and bring forth much fruite. Then
it is by this place very apparant, that a
man may draw out a sure & an infal-
lible argument, against all those whiche
are idle, and slouthful in the profession
of religion, and as they say key colde, or
slack in the worship, & seruice of god, or
vnfruitful in good workes: namely, that
they are graceles, voide of faith & those
vertues which doe euer accompany the
same: for when Saint Peter saith, if these
things bee with you, they will make that
ye shal not be idle, nor vnfruitful, it fo-
loweth necessarily, that such as bee idle,
which ariseth for want of zeale, or bee
vnfruitful, continuing in their finnes, it
is, because they did neuer yet come to
the true knowledge of Christ: they may
wel boast theselues, of their strong faith,
make a brave shewe of their skill, & fine
wit, so that men might think there were
some deepe thing in them, & that they
shold be able euerto iudge, & giue a right
verdit, in al matters: but a man reading
but

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but euen this place, finding them ydle,
and vnfruitful, (yea euen a simple man)
shal easily founde them to the bottome,
and say of them, that they haue not as
yet knowne or learned Christe: because
they want those former thinges. Wee
must note this also, when hee saith, If
these thinges abounde in you: this is,
that wee should not content our selues,
with a scant and bare measure of faith,
of vertue, of knowledge, and of the rest,
as he setteth them downe: but we must
labour to haue a dayly increase, for that
must bee gathered by this, that he pric-
keth forward these ripe, and grounded
men. A doctrine most necessary to be
vrged, because if men haue gone two,
or three steppes, or haue once a litle be-
gunne, to labour about these thinges, so
that they can looke backe, and see some
come behinde them, or can say I thanke
God, I knowe somewhat. I hope that I
am not without faith, somewhat there is
which I haue done, that I would be loth
to doe againe: they by and by persua-
de themselves, that they are sufficiently fur-
nished; so that they wil not sticke to say,

E

I trust

The third Sermon.

I trust I haue that which shall serue the
turne. Naye, the Apostle telleth vs an
other thing heere from the Lord, & that
is, that we must overflow in these, and a-
bunde: and truth it is, that these men
which thinke they bee well fraught, and
so seeke for no further increase of store,
haue as yet nothing, for if they had once
founde the sweete of these thinges, and
seene withall that they are farre behind,
and in beggerly need, they would neuer
content themselues with so little: for
who is hee, which feeleth increase in
worldlye treasure, that wil crie hoc,
and say, I haue enough? Is there lesse in
the heavenly treasures to drawe men to
like them, than in the earthy? Or is it
because men doe not knowe them? Wee
must learne to take heede of such there-
fore, as woulde beare men in hande, that
it is sufficient, yea, that it is the best of al,
for men to content theselues with some
civill honestie, and not to seeke and wee-
rie their mindes to gaine knoweledge.
But these were neuer as yet the men,
which might bee right called the schol-
lers of Christe, much lesse wee are to
deeme

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deeme them worthie masters, or teachers of others, when they goe flat contrary to the holy Apostle of Christe, who willeth to seek for so great abundance; when as they would contrēt themselves and persuaade others to bee contented, with scant a shadowe of these thinges, which shoulde bee so plentifully founde in them. Notwithstanding some are so blinde, that hauing no shadow or shewe at al of goodnesse, yet thinke they bee gone farre enough. In the next verse where hee saith, Hee that hath not these thinges, is blinde, and seeth not a farre of, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his olde sinnes; hee setteth forth the discommodities which follow the want of these vertues. And this hee doth, because some man wil be litle moued to heare that commoditie which hee spake of, and wil say, what care I though I bee idle? What care I though I bee vnfruitful? I will not goe about to be better thē other men, what should I labour to excel those which are wiser then I? If then they wil not regard this, that these vertues wil make them

excellent seruants of God, yet let them consider what the Apostle maketh them without the same, where hee affirmeth them first to bee blinde, (a very miserable thing in the bodily sight, much more in the spirituall, which hee here meaneth:) when God hath so cleerely reuealed himself in the face of his sonne, in the knowledge which bringeth salvation, that the God of this worlde, as Saint Paule speaketh. 2. Cor. 4. should so blinde their minds, that the light of the glorious Gospel of Christe, which is the image of God, shoulde not shine vnto them. Secondly he saith, they cannot see a farre of, or that they be pore blinde, for such as haue the beames of sight scattering or spreading a sunder, so soone as they be out of the eye, cā see wel enough iust by them, but not a farre of, to these S. Peter doth compare those men. But it may be asked what he meaneth: first to say they be starke blinde, & afterward to attribute some sight vnto them. It may seeme by this worde, that hee maketh their case not so euil, as before he had saide it was: yes euen as euill, for he
saith

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saith as much in this worde, as he did in the other: for when he saith, They cannot see a farre of, hee taketh from them al sight of heauenly thinges, which are remoued from vs, & seene only by faith: hee doeth not denie them the sight of those things which are at hand, because they haue a good and a sharpe sight in the thinges of this worlde, for the most part, better then they which can see a far of. But what are these quicke wits the better, whe they are but for this world, and their condition no better then that of the poore beast, (yea muche worse) when we respect the misery in the world to come? Let not this therefore cause the to set vp their bristles, that they can see so wel and pearcingly at hande, (that is, in earthly thinges) when as they are as blinde as beetles in things a far of, that is to say, in heauenly thinges. Heere wee must seeke to haue eyes giuen vs of god, with which wee may be able to see beyonde this worlde: for before such time as the Lorde hath giuen vs some glimmering of heauenly thinges, wee shal neuer couet to obtaine them. And this is

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the cause that these poreblinde men neuer passe greatly to know the Gospel of Christe. Thirdly he saith, they haue forgottē that they were purged from their olde finnes : as hee said they were blind, so now he saith, they are forgetful: and this forgetfulnesse is so much the more shameful, as it is in a chiefe & principal point of true religion. But where shall wee find the man, which if he be examined will confesse that he hath forgotten this point? It seemeth none doe forget it, because the very wicked will seeme to set al vpon this score, that their sins are purged, and that maketh them sinne so franckly. But if we vnderstande the Apostle wel, we shall finde very many which haue forgotten this point. Now here we must first note that our finnes are said to bee purged, when there is satisfaction made for them by redemption in the blood of Christe.

Secondly that they are said to be purged by grace or sanctification, when by the power of Gods spirit, sinne, or all sinfull affections are suppressed and killed in vs: so then there is a purging in redemption,

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redemption, and there is also a purging by sanctification : Nowe if they haue not forgotten so much, but that they can prattle of the purging of their sins, by redemption, yet they haue forgotten this, that they were redeemed to the ende they shoulde no longer serue sinne but purge away the olde leauen : But beeing without those former graces, he sayeth they haue forgotten this, not meaning thereby that they had euer learned it, for if they had, yet at the least they had not wel learned it : wee may see by this howe many there bee, which are starke blinde, and haue forgotten that Christians are called to liue in righteousness and holinesse of life. If we looke vpon the small number of those which haue a care to seeke after ϕ Lord, and howe small a parte of them doe come (I will not saye to abounde,) but to haue a competent measure of those forenamed vertues. Let vs come alwayes to this true measure, and not bee deceiued neither in our selues, nor in other. Let vs bee ashamed if we be carnall, to take vpon vs the name of the true

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professours: let vs denie vnto them the honorable name of Christiāns, which are but filthie swine, and prophane dogges, as our Sauour Christe calleth them: to conclude this matter, none are allowed to bee true receiuers of the Gospel, but such as ioyne vertue with their faith, & with vertue knowledge, and so temperance, patience, godlinesse, brotherly kindenes, and loue, and such as also doe seeke to abound in them: the rest which care not for these, or contēt themselues with the bare shewe of them, although they would seeme to be worshippers of God, and deuout persons, yet they are by this doctrine of the Lord wholly shut forth, vntill they haue learned a newe lesson. Remember that this is the doctrine of God, and not of man. Remember that we must stand and dwell vpon it, not for a day, or two, while wee haue hearde it, but all our life long to bring it to the practise, it is plaine and cleere, none can be excused if they know it not and so through simplicitie stand vpon the common faith, thinking to shroude themselves wel vnder the shadow of the multi-

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multitude: but when God hath warned them, who wil pitie them, when they wil not be warned: if this were not told vs, and that by God him selfe, wee might thinke, as men doe commonly, that a very little doth content the Lord, that no great things are required at the handes of Christians, and other such foolish, and vaine opinions, as to say, they must hope wel when God telleth them, there is no hope, vnlesse they walke this way, also that it is not good to bee ouer precise, when as in goodnes a man cannot proceede too far, nor offer too much obedience to the Lorde. To make an ende, let none of al these things blinde vs, because they blinde some, which stande in reputation of their owne wisdom.

Esay 55. 1. The

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10 Wherefore brethren, giue rather diligence to make your calling & election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall neuer fall.

11 For by this meanes an entering shall be ministred vnto you abundantly, in to the euerlasting kingdome of our Lord and Saniour Iesus Christ.

¶ I hath beene tolde vnto you already, vpon the verses which goe next before, howe that Saint Peter regarding howe dull wee are and backward in godlinesse, contented not himselfe with his exhortation which he maketh, but setteth downe what we shall gaine if we follow his aduise, and also what hurt we shall sustaine by the contrary: and this hath partly been handeled in the two other verses, & partly in these two which wee haue now in hand: where indeed he doth propounde so great a commodity which we shal gaine, if wee giue all diligence

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gence to pursue the former things, as is almost incomparable: even this, that we shal come to the assurance, that wee are called & chosen of God: a thing so necessary for vs to knowe, that without it, there is no right faith, no frank and willing obedience, no sounde ioy. For although without this, men seeme to beleeue, yet is it but a wauering fantasie, to do many good things, yet they proceed but from a seruile minde, to laugh & reioyce, yet is it but in a desperate madnes which in very deed is greatly to be wondered at, howe men shoulde bee able to sport themselves, & yet to speak in their consciences after this maner, there is hel, and eternal flames of vengeance prepared for sinners, and I am not sure whether I shal escape or not: this desperate and brutish securitie shalbe apparant to bee the more mad, if wee compare it, and set it foorth by an outward comparison. Let it bee thus, a man is taken in a robberie or murder, imprisoned, brought before the Iudge, and condemned, by suite of friends reprimed vntill such time as they maye sue for

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to get him a pardon: in the meane time
some of his acquaintance come to this
murtherer, and will him to be of good
cheere, & merie, he wil answere, vnlesse
he be some mad and desperate ruffian, I
am condemned to the Gallowes, the
Iudge hath pronounced the sentence of
death vpon mee, I know not how harde
a thing it wil bee to obtaine a pardon, I
stand in great doubt, and for this cause
I cannot bee merie, vnlesse I myghte
know for certaintie that I should escape,
if I did once know that, I could bee as
mery as any man that liueth, before that
tyme I may seeme to laughe, but my
hearte is full of feare and sorrowe, And
is it not thus with vs all, are wee not all
of vs gilty, and alreadie condemned by
the sentence of the highest Iudge: not
to some torment of one day, or shorte
continuance, but to the fire that shal ne-
uer be quenched? When men can be
merie therefore and laugh euen in those
things which cause this destruction, and
yet doe feele that they are not sure to
escape this dreadfull vengeance, is it not
a mad mirth and a desperate laughter,

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in which if they were not become verye
senseles blockes, they shoulde feelee many
gripings at the hart, which would marre
all their myrth, yea a worme that gnaw-
eth in suche wise, that they can haue no
quiet rest, nor as I said before no sound
ioy. If we were not therefore more then
desperate and mad fooles, the thought
of hel would dampe al our mirth vntyl
such time as we be sure that we haue esca-
ped it. This then which the Apostle saith
heere is a princely commoditie, that
walking the way which he hath prescri-
bed, we shall come to the assurance, that
wee are the called and chosen of the
Lord. But it may be demanded how this
can agree with other sayings in the holy
scriptures, which doe plainly teach that
God choseth whom he will of his owne
free grace, for which S. Paule alleadgeth
out of Moses, that God will haue mercy
on whomsoever he wil haue mercy, and
whom he wil he hardeneth: adding ther
upō that it is neither of him that willeth
nor yet of him that runneth, but of god
which sheweth mercy: againe the doc-
trine of Popery is, that God doth make
choyse

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choise, conditionally respecting the good
deeds which he did foresee in the: & so
the election shold depend vpon the wor-
thines of the mé: we are to answer that
this place hath nothing in it whiche is
contrary to that free choise which God
maketh without respect of any thinge
that is in vs, for he could finde nothing
in vs that might any way moue him, nei-
ther doth it serue at al for to proue that
election is conditional: because S. Peter
doth not handle in this place, wherevpon
election is founded, or what moued
god to make choise, nor to shew wherein
the certaintie & stablenesse of election
doth stand; but his meaning is, to teach
vs how we shal attaine to this incompa-
rable treasure, to bee out of doubt, and
surely resolved in our selues, not by fan-
tasied opinions, but by sure & substantial
prooffe, that we be chosen of God, and
therfore cannot perish. If we respect the
vnchangeable counsel of God, therein
doth rest alone the sure foundation of e-
lection, because God which cannot bee
deceiued, nor cannot repent, or change,
hath made the choise, therefore those
whom

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whom he hath chosen, can neuer perishe
but if we regard the way and meanes, by
which we may come to know this fauor
of God to be toward vs, the Lord by his
apostle telleth vs, that this is ^{the} way, euen
to giue al diligence & study, to be richly
decked with his graces, or those forena-
med vertues, for by these wee shall vn-
doubtedly know, because if we haue the,
if they abound in vs, if we walk in them,
we shal, as he saith, neuer fal, Let vs learn
therefore first this, that election in it self
refleth vpon the vnchangeable purpose
& counsel of God. Then secōdly that we
are not to fetch the certentie of it in our
selues, from som reuelation, neither are
we to clime vp into heauen, to search in
the counsels of god, whether our names
be in the booke of life. But we are to fetch
our warrant from within our selues, and
that from the fruits of the spirite, which
indeed although it be out of our selues,
yet because it is not of our selues, is cer-
tain & infallible. If ye wil vnderstād this
more plainly, first I say, it is out of our
selues, or from within our selues because
wee must take the triall, whether those
things

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things bee in vs, which are giuen to al those whome God doeth choose, then I say it is not of our selues, for if it were, it should be altogether vncertaine, But of the seale of God wherwith he hath sealed vs, which is the spirite of sanctification: now mark wel I pray you. If you do, (saith S. Peter) these things, you shal neuer fall: and why, is it because our doings are so perfect and sure, or that we are so constant of our selues? no not so, but by these vertues we know that we are sealed with Gods spirite, whose woorke wee feelee in vs: wee know also that as many as are led by the spirite of God are the sonnes of God. Rom. 8. From hence it commeth, that looke howe muche more a man feeleth in him selfe the increase of knowledge, the increase of vertues and heavenly desires, so muche more sure hee is, that hee is the childe of God, and as the one increaseth, so increaseth also the other. Contrariwise when a man feeleth within him selfe an euil conscience, feeleth that he is darkened in his vnderstanding, ledde by the lustes of Sinne: hee shall in spite of his
teeth

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teeth within himselfe, sing this dolefull song, I knowe not whether I shal bee saued or not; and looke howe the other may say I knowe I shal be saued, because God hath sealed me with his spirite: so may this say, I am sure to bee damned continuing in this case, because I haue not faith, but onely a wauering and doubtfull opinion. We may see by this how beneficial they are, and merciful to their owne soules, which with al their power day & night giue vp themselves to seek after the knowledge and obedience of the Lords wil: for not giuing ouer, nor waxing wearie, they shal in continuance of time, if they ply it hard, find such a blessing from the Lord, in the increase of faith and vertue, that wil cause them to say, we haue not lost our labor. On the other side wee may see howe vnkinde and cruel they are to themselves, which through idlenes, & slouth, in seeking after God, with their daily and continual sinnes, doe euen as it were cut the throte of their faith, seeing they cannot haue truste in him; whome they doe so much disobey. This place is as a mightie
F engine

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engine to overthrow the vanitie of sundrie opinions which doe reigne in men. As first of al in those whiche crie out against this doctrine, as a thing which will make men carelesse and idle in the seruice of God, and stoppe the course of good woorkes. I beseech you marke how wel these great wise men haue profited in Gods schoole, see howe they agree with the holy Apostle, he saith wee are to giue al our studie and diligence in good woorkes to come to the sure and vndoubred knowledge, that we be chosen vnto life: they say quite contrary, if ye wil haue men careful of wel doing, away with the doctrine of election, for it will marre al: thus the wisdom of fleshe doth proudly lift vp it selfe euen against God (but howe foolishly, a very child may see:) Doeth that thing which wee cannot come to the knowledge of, without exceeding care of godlinesse, abundance of vertue, and plentie of all good woorkes, destroy in men the studie and care of good woorkes? But proud fleshe is worthily blind. Some other, although not thus brutishly blinded, yet greatly
ouer-

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ouerseene, when they thinke on this doctrine, which is set vp vnto vs as the mark for vs to aime at in al our doings, and the trial whether we haue done wel or not: I meane the trial in this respect, and when a man hath done many good deedes, hee shal know he hath not done them wel, if hee yet doubt, whether hee bee one of Gods chosen, for howsoeuer hee passeth it ouer, yet his conscience (which doth in some sort know, that he hath not dealt but for vaine glory, or some other sinister respect) wil not suffer him to haue this faith: For God doth not woorke so darkely by his spirite in men, but that they may learne to knowe whether it bee of him, if they woulde make a due triall: because wee must not rest in the outwarde doing of good thinges, but in the right doing. Let him therefore whiche giueth him selfe to doe good woorkes, (and yet feeleth not this, which Saint Peter saith, we shal) suspect that his doinges are mishappen, and be careful to fashion them after the rules of the worde. A thirde sort

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of men there be, which with might and
maine wil defende this doctrine, that
men ought to be sure of saluation, that
wee cannot more honour God, then to
giue full credite to his promises, and be-
cause the plaine testimonie of the scrip-
ture compelleth them, they affirme it
constantly, and condemne the contrary
as a foule error, that God hath chosen
men, and men come to feele & to know
this: And therefore because it is a true
doctrine, they say also that they them-
selues are sure, that God hath chosen
them, but when they take not the way
to become sure, which S. Peter here hath
set downe, but goe in a contrary path, &
are spotted with filthie crimes, wee may
boldly say, they be lyers: for although
they bragge with their tongues of that
that they should bee, yet there is a byrde
in their brest, which doth sing in a con-
trary note, and telleth them plainly what
they bee. Another kinde of men there
bee, which in no case can be perswaded,
that any man may bee sure of his salua-
tion, and therefore with scoffs they aske
of

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of them which professe the word, when God tolde them so? If it were a thing whiche were not to bee, or could not be knowne, then the Apostle hath greatly ouershot himselfe, in telling vs howe wee shal come to hee sure. But aske a question of them, whether they do not beleue in God, euery one wil answere, I put al my whole trust in him: reason then a little further and tel the, that the Scripture which cannot lye, saith, That al which trust in God shalbe saued: how then wil they ioyne these together, that they truste in G O D, and yet doubt whether they shal bee saued? Can God deceiue? or say they, they know not what? Vndoubtedly if they did know that they haue trust, they shoulde also knowe they cannot perish. But let vs learne by this the miserie of our time: in which men doe stil thinke this doctrine to be straunge. Nowe let vs come to the particuler application of this doctrine, in which euery one must come home to himselfe, remembring first, that such as God hath called home to him-

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selfe, and chosen to be his children, hee doth also giue vnto them true faith and feeling that they bee his elect: and such as perceiue no suche thinge in themselves: are in a very miserable case, and as yet we may say forlorne creatures: therefore euerye man in him selfe must aske this question, of his owne soule, how goeth the matter with thee: Art thou sure GOD hath chosen thee? Doeſt thou feele any assurance of eternal life? The conscience wil answere vprightlie if wee be not negligent to make inquirie: then if wee finde this within. I am not sure, for I doubt and stagger: wee must inquire without selues thus, what is the cause, God is faithfull which hath promised eternal life vnto all which beleeue: our heart wil make answere, thou regardest not the feare of God, thou art full of foule finnes, euill lustes doe reigne in thee, thou doeſt not studie for the knowledge of Gods word, thou art vnfruitfull and barren in good woorkes, therefore thou canſt not say, I am led by the spirit of God, and therefore sure I shall be

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shalbe saued : if hee bee wise hee will
not stay heere, as the maner of fooles is,
saying I am not sure indeede, neither do
I thinke any man can bee, I commit it
to God, let him doe with mee what he
will : these speeches may seeme to
haue some wit and godlinesse in them,
but they are in deede diuelish and mad,
because God hath taught vs a contrary
lesson in this place : but goe this steppe
further, may I come to this assurance? &
which is the way? The Lorde doth an-
swere by his Apostle, thou maiest come
to this assurance, and pointeth him out
the way: euen that which you haue hard,
wherein hee must painefully trauel and
goe forward, not for a gird or a braide,
and waxe idle againe, but still labour, for
these men had gone a great way and yet
they are willed to proceede still, if the
Lorde giue not this assurance, wee are to
labour so much the more, and to bee
so much the more importunate, to sus-
pect our iudgement, and to seeke for
knowledge, to call our selues to a more
straite account, to set a watch ouer our
affections too see with what mynde

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wee doe things, to foster no sin willingly in vs, nor to bee slacke to any good worke which God hath appointed, to cal and cry vnto God for faith, and his spirite to guide vs, to vse the meanes diligently which God hath appointed, as the hearing, searching, & meditating in the word: thus in time (for it is wrought in men by degrees, & they neuer come to the ful) God will let them see that he is their God. That neither life nor death, height or depth, things present or things to come, Angels, Principalities, nor powers, nor any creature shall separate vs from his loue in Christe. It followeth in the next verse, For by this meanes an entring shalbe ministred vnto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdome of our Lorde Iesus Christe. This is a confirmation of the last clause of the former sentence, where he saith, If you doe these things, you shal neuer fall: and why? because you shal haue a great entrance into y^e eternal kingdome of Christ: as that is a confirmation of the other, where he saith, Make your calling and election sure, as the reason foloweth there

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there, Ye shall come to bee sure : howe?
because he which proceedeth so far that
he knoweth he shal neuer fal away from
God to destruction, hee is, (as it must
needes bee,) sure also that hee is chosen:
for hee speaketh not here of euery parti-
cular fal into sinne, which is the moste
godly : but saith Saint Peter, I tell you if
you doe these things, yee shal neuer fall,
not because there is any such stablenes
in our selues, or in our own workes, but
wee know they bee the frutes of Gods
spirite in vs, which is his seale, set vppon
none but those whom he doth mark vp
to life eternal, & he is vnchangeable: so
it foloweth here, ye shal not fal, for they
that haue a rich entrance into the king-
dome of Christe, which is euerlasting, so
that Christe doth reigne in them, as hee
doth in all the faithful by his spirite, can
not fal, vntil the power of Christe faile,
and his kingdome come to an end. For
we must note, that the force of the rea-
son, resteth in the difference which is be-
tweene the kingdome of Christ and the
kingdomes of this worlde : in which
though they bee neuer so mightie, & ful

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of policie and wisedome, yet they should come to an ende, and therefore a man cannot rightly say vnto the subiects, you haue a mightie Prince, who is bountifull and gracious, your peace therefore and happie estate shall endure for euer: naye, the mightie may bee overcome, if not by men, at leastwise by death, and so they may be to day in peace and good estate, to morowe al in an yprore, to day vnder a louing and gracious Prince, to morowe vnder a fierce tyrant: so vncertaine is the state of the kingdom of this worlde: but in the kingdome of Christe, whose power is aboue al, and can neuer come to an ende, but is as he saith here, eternal, it is farre otherwise, because his state is vnchangeable, so is theirs that be once entred thereinto, and therefore are sure they can neuer fal. Whosoever doth but euē streightly looke over these words of the apostle, if he haue any sight at al, he must needes confesse al this, the matter is so cleere, that we can but marvel how it should come to passe that this doctrine of the Lord, set forth by his apostle, should finde so few friends, and
so

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so many extreeme enemies: but indeed men which are lyers, doe in this thing confesse the truth, that they feele not any such matter, & therefore cannot abide to heare that al true godly men, & faithfull Christiāns haue this knowledge in themselves: but let vs giue eare to þe Apostle, who telleth vs how we shal com to haue Christe to be our king, & to reigne ouer vs, namely if we yeld vp our selues to the gouernance of his spirit, which worketh al goodnes in our hearts, subduing and vāquishing al the rebels which we beare about in vs. Cōtrariwise it must needs be graunted, þe such as are beastly Epicures, folowing their own fleshly mind, letting lose the raines, & giuing the swing vnto the raging lustes of the fleshe, despising the knowledge of Gods wil, & therefore regard not his worde: though with full mouth they cal Christ their king & their lord: yet when god saith here by his apostle, that the entrance into his kingdom is by this means, that we follow after vertue, knowledge and godlines: they shew that they be none of his subiects, being altogether void of his spirit, but the bod
slaves

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flaves of sin and Satan, whose kingdome they vphold, with tooth & naile: & that maketh them, euen as those which are of another Corporatiō to fight against the truth, & those which professe it: deuising al the colours & shifts they can to maintaine sin, inuenting al the flanders that may be to discredite the godly conuersation of such as folow the way here prescribed: condemning them as ouer precise & curious, if they do but looke this way which God willeth al his seruantes to walk: if God doe open their eyes, to see but euē in a glimmering, that whiche he doth teach in this place, they would be ashamed of their master and blush at that, which now they boaste & brag of: they would also confesse that like blinde buzzards and madde beasts, they haue fought against God, & not men: finally it would make them change their waies, and seeke diligently to haue the witnes within themselves, that they bee the seruants of God. We must marke wel one other thing which is here spoken, to wit that he saith an entrāce shalbe ministred vnto you, abundantly or richly: as if hee should

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should say, when ye haue labored & tra-
uelled, to bee as it were wel soked & sea-
soned in godlines, & plentifully decked
with al graces & gifts of the spirit, yeshal
by degrees proceede so far, and gaine so
much, that your entrance into the king-
dom of Christ shalbe very great: where-
vpon it doth folow, that they shalbe past
danger, & may wel warrant themselves,
of sure stāding in asmuch as Christ hath
not onely begun to reigne in them, and
to bee their king, but also in great mea-
sure and mightily. But doth he not adde
this one worde more then needeth? Is it
not enough to haue an entrance, vnlesse
wee haue a riche entrance into his king-
dome: doth Christ once begin to reigne
in a man, and to drine out the power of
Satan, and afterward cast him of againe
to destruction? I answer that this word
is not added in vaine, for wee be taught
thereby to take heede that wee content
not our selues with some litle taste and
smal entrance; for his purpose is to make
a difference betweene suche on the one
part as make some beginning, and haue
some good desires & motions in them,
and

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and do taste of the good word of God,
and are in some sort lightned, but over-
come with sinful lustes, & vaine delights
of the flesh, they slide back againe soden-
ly, they were but for a brunt, it bringeth
foorth no ripe fruite in them, neither to
speake properly, did Christe euer reigne
in them: and such on the other part as
proccede vnto the deepe rooting out of
sinne, & sure and fast planting the truth
in their heartes, going forward dayly
from grace to grace, and from strength
to strength, vntil Christe haue set vp his
throne in them, and beare sway, to the
ouerthrow of the power of darknes, and
bereuing the Diuel of the interest hee
had, and thrusting him from the posses-
sion which hee helde: a doctrine which
must needes doe vs much good if wee
beleene it: and very needefull to be vr-
ged instantly, considering the nature &
disposition of men at this day: they are
afraide of going too farre in vertue and
knowledge, they count it a needlesse
thing to bee admonished or taught di-
ligentlie, they take great scorne to bee
counted such as may bee amended, yea
and

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and that which is more, when as they haue not learned the first pointe of a Christian scholler, they will seeme perfect: so farre are they from hauing this abundant entring into the kingome of Christe.

Learne heere therefore, dearly beloved, and learne it wel, lay sure hold thereof that it do not slip from you, for God teacheth vs heere the onely way to life and happines: let go the vaine dreames & doltish opinions of people sotted in their ignorance, which are so far blinded by the malice of Satan, that which way soeuer they goe, still they are in hope of eternal glory, as though the way to heauen were so brode that a man could not goe out of it, and the entrance so easie, that he may enter when he wil: for this is the diuinitie of our time: howsoeuer a man spend his time in ignorance, not caring for, nor seeking after the true knowledge of god, howsoeuer he be defiled with foule & beastly sinnes, that in deed there be nothing in him but pride, self loue, vaine glory, enuie, gluttony, the lustes of adulterie, and such like, yea, so
farre

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farre, that the scripture doeth liken him to a swine or a dogge: yet if as they say, hee haue God in his minde, and can say, Lorde haue mercy vpon mee, they thinke this is all that can bee required of men, they wil not sticke to acquite al suche: beeing nothing at al acquainted with that, which God telleth in this place by his Apostle, howe farre men must proceede in his feare before they can wel warrant themselues to bee in good case. For ye may as wel ioyne heauen and hell together, fire and water wil assoone agree, light and darkenesse, are as like one another, as the common faith is to that whiche wee are taught in this place. But I wil returne to applie this doctrine to the godly, for whom it is written: howe they may, as wee vse to say, make this thing dead sure: for there is many a godly man, which after long trauel, and much care to please God, is yet so matched with stubborn nature so deeply infected and poysoned with sinne, that he is compelled, although he haue gained muche and doeth feeble the power of Gods spirit in him, sometimes

to

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to bee in doubt, and to thinke his labor
but lost, because hee cannot get so great
a victorie as he would faine: let not this
man be dismaied, but let him goe for-
ward, remembbring what is here promi-
sed: the more hee wanteth, the more let
him strine, and hee shal plainly perceiue,
that God regardeth his care and trauel,
considereth his sighes and grones, and
wil performe all his desires: let him re-
member that these men whome S. Peter
wrote vnto, had obtained the precious
faith, did knowe and were established in
the present truth, & yet they were not so
far but ^h they may bee moued to make
their election sure, to seeke a further en-
trance into the kingdom of Christ: & so
to continue that which was but begun.
We ought the more to be moued here-
vnto, because the worlde is euer full of
fearful examples, which if they were wel
considered, wold make a mans haire to
stand vpright, when hee shal see that for
want of this doctrine, or at the least the
not practising of it, ther be many which
seeme not only to haue had some good
liking of the truth, but also a great zeale,

G

even

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euē to suffer some what for the same,
which are become euē as cold as ylc, &
scarce any point of godlines left in the;
yea though they would beare mē in hād
that they haue, like good schollers pro-
ceeded to the highest fourme, y et when
our great master shal pose them, they
shal not be alowed to sit in the lowest: so
dangerous a thing it is once to relent or
slacken our care, vntil wee haue gotten
this ful assurance, and made this rich en-
trance into the kingdom of Christ, that
wee feele our selues to be led by the spi-
rit of God, and feele it, not by any vaine
conceit of our owne foolish braine, nor
by sensles securitie, but by the working
and fruits of the same spirit. If this were
wel weighed, men woulde not content
themselues with so litle, or nothing; they
woulde not make so light account of
teaching: they would leaue of their slan-
derous and reprochful raylinges: they
would not like filthie swine wallow the-
selues stil in the filthie mire of their sins:
they would not prattle so much of this,
that al are sinners, and therefore thinke
al are alike, shuffling together one with
another.

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another: nay God wil sunder them, for
he hath taught here who bee godly and
faithful, such as he taketh and accepteth
for his children: and who bee vngodly
Infidels, children of the diuel, and heires
of hel. For in very deede, though al bee
sinners, yet they greatly differ, for some
continue in their sinnes, seducing & de-
ceiuing themselves with vaine hope of
Gods mercy: some do repent after the
maner here prescribed the, which stan-
deth in this, that they cleanse themselves
more and more from al filthines of the
fleshe, and growe in al vertues and gra-
ces, vntil they be decked in their soules,
with heavenly ornaments, and haue yel-
ded vp them selues too haue Christe
raigne in them. As for þe commo repen-
tance, to erie only with words for mer-
cy, i. some light measure to be greued,
to feare the iudgementes of God, and
yet the soule within nothing changed,
nor the spirit renewed, nor Christe raig-
ning in the heart: it doth but deceiue all
which trust to it. Most true it is, þ what
time soeuer a sinner doth repent, hee is
forgiuen; but this is as like to that repen-

The fourth Sermon.

tance, which is here by S. Peter described, as we say, an Apple is to an Oyster: for if wee looke wel vnto them both, we shal finde them to agree in very fewe thinges, and those even the least. Let vs I say once again fasten our steppes in this way, let vs goe forward, and not so much as looke back, vntil such time as we haue by our owne experience, proued that to bee true which is taught by Saint Peter. For it is not enough to beleue that this is true (although that be somewhat) vnles wee trie it to bee so by our selues. Hee is now a stark foole which seeth this to be the only way to happines, and for slouth wil not walke in it: as though the kingdom of heauen were not worth the travelling for. We may gather also in this place, if wee bee not senses, howe great enemies they be to the saluatiō of ment which would vtterly debar them of the worde, that is appointed to bee the instrument by which god worketh al these good things in his seruants: for without y^e (as it may be easily gathered here) we cā do nothing. It doth also appeare, that those are in a miserable case, whose

office

The fourth Sermon.

office and duetic is, not onlie to shewe men some part of Gods will, but to bring them thus far as S. Peter doth require, if they be not wel furnished, and have walked first this way themselves: for how shal they bring other men, to that, which themselves haue not, nor knowe not? It doeth appeare also that God hath shewed a sore iudgement against that people, whiche haue suche a guide as cannot shewe them this way: which is the onely way to heaven: for doubtlesse it is more then if he shoulde thunder vpon them from heaven, or fire their houses ouer their heads: especially when they are so blind, that they see not the plague, but thinke themselves in better case then those whome God doth ouer rule by his word. But woe, & woe againe be to those blinde guides, & shepherds, which doe not feed: & wretched is that people which are as sheepe with, out a shepheard. For how shal they euer heare of these things? We can but pitie their misery, and desire the Lord to send redresse, in so lamentable and desperate a case: which is thought to be nothing, because

The fourth Sermon.

because indeed the most men know nothing: for had they but knowne what god requireth in that man whom he wil save, though they were not partakers of it themselves, yet they would consent & agree to the doctrine: and confesse that there is no way to attain eternal life, but by so sound teaching as may bring people to the things here required. But I wil here make an end.

O Lorde graunt, that this doctrine which thou hast taught vs in this thy holy word, may enter into vs, & dwell in vs for ever: that so we may be sure of thy fauour and of eternal life, through Iesus Christe thy deare sonne our Lorde and only sauour, Amen.



their manner of life, and to send
redemption to all that are
in bondage to sin. And thus
it is that we are to be
redeemed from all unrighteousness
and iniquity, and to be
purified unto himselfe a peculiar
people zealous of good works.

